



The Official Monthly Newsletter of CSI Church Toronto

Pilgrim

Volume 12 Issue 1

JANUARY 2012



2012 Motto

*See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.* Isaiah 43: 19



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Pilgrim

JANUARY 2012

EDITORIAL BOARD

Chief Editor

Rev. Shaji M. Johnson

Editor

Samuel Anselm Samuel

Publication Team

Suja Sarah Koshy

Annie Koshy

Abraham P. George

Samuel Chacko

Address

CSI Parsonage
15 Masters Green Crescent
Brampton ON
L7A 3K3 CANADA
(905) 789- 8238

Articles/ Feedback

May be sent to
pilgrimcsi.to@gmail.com

Editorial

Pilgrim's Progress

Leaving behind a plethora of varied, distinct experiences, the year 2011 is walking out. 2012, with her bounty, has been eagerly awaiting this transition to affect our lives. People generally think about *resolutions* as a big step towards ushering in the New Year. It is good to ponder those resolutions that have gone past our lives unaccomplished. We usually try to achieve something that we couldn't through the past years. As I read elsewhere, resolutions are but a *To Do list* for the first week of January which is subsequently forgotten and forsaken. Have you made a list of New Year resolutions? Have you prioritized it? Is your journey as a pilgrim towards eternity, one of the concerns? It is high time to know our limitations and inefficiency.

Amidst the pressing concerns, shall we not look to our Lord and rely on His unchanging Word? He has promised us through the 2012 motto that He's going to transform us into worthy vessels of praise. He's going to make the impossible happen, 'a way in the wilderness and streams in wasteland'. As we accept the omnipotence of the Emmanuel, El Shaddai, let's break forth into joy for, 'but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.'(Isaiah 40:31). This hope in the Lord will enable us to surrender to His divine will, endure hardships, accomplish the impossible and fulfill the purpose of our lives.

Wish you a blessed and prosperous New Year!

Samuel Anselm Samuel
Editor

Achen's Message



Dearly beloved in Christ,

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

I thank God Almighty for bringing us together into the threshold of a new year. Let us welcome 2012 with great expectations and deep prayers. Let us praise and thank our God for being an unchanging God. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He has promised never to leave us nor forsake us. He has been so faithful to our families and parish. So let our hearts be filled with thanksgiving as we bid 2011 goodbye and usher in the New Year. Our loving God has been so good to us during 2011 and He will always be good and keep all His promises. Let us also thank Lord for using us for His service in our church in various ways. He will continue to use us and open greater opportunities for our parish in 2012. Let us be obedient to our master and put up with His Words. We are called to fulfill His mandate to His Church. Let us continue to give ourselves to Him by serving Him without any reservations.

The motto chosen for our church for 2012 is from Isaiah 43:19. "This is what the Lord says...See, I am about to do something brand-new!" We need to understand that God is far more interested in our future than He is in our past. God wants to grant hope and encouragement to His folks. The fact is that God wants to give us a fresh start in life, a new opening. So it's our contractual obligation to yield our lives to God in order to know His will and be set apart by him.

I thank God for showering blessings on our solemn Christmas Carol Service. It was in fact a graceful occasion with the esteemed presence of Bishop Philip Poole and his wife, guests and our loving members. I salute our choir for inspiring us with their celestial gift of singing. I admit and acknowledge the untiring efforts of so many, who prepared everything for the success of the Carol Service.

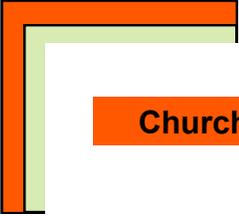
As we enter into the New Year, I request you to review your ecclesiastical life. Some might view it as a routine and would have created certain comfort zones. But remember, it is time to embrace a challenge to serve our church diligently. I strongly appeal to you to come out of your routine, comfort zones, and do whatever is required for our church. This demands a change on your part. We are given endless possibilities; we need to count them as responsibilities. God has placed us in our great sanctuary to work and take care of it as Adam and Eve were put in the garden of Eden (Gene. 2:15). We need to have commitment in our church life to gather the harvest in abundance. We may have interest in doing everything properly. 'But there's a difference between interest and commitment. When you're interested in doing something, you do it only when circumstance permits.' When you're committed to something, you accept no excuses; only results". Ours is a mission and our master expects great things from us. Every moment of our life is precious. We should not waste it in useless pursuits, but devote it to the search of self and God. We can really make a difference provided, we work together for the glory of God.

I wish you all a very happy and Blessed New Year 2012!

May God bless you all

Yours in Christ

Shajiachen



Church News

Pilgrim

Fasting Prayer

Our monthly fasting prayer will be held from 10 am to 1pm on January 7th 2012. All are invited.

Mission Sunday

We will be observing January 15th as Mission Sunday. Ms. Sarah John will deliver the message.

Sunday School

The Sunday School exam will be held on February 5, 2012. The anniversary will be celebrated on February 12, 2012

Cottage prayer meeting

Cottage prayer for Scarborough, Markham, Richmond Hill areas will be held at 6.30 pm on January 14th 2012 at Mr & Mrs Babu Modyal Joseph's residence. All the area members are requested to attend.

Cottage prayer for Mississauga, Brampton, Toronto, Stratford areas will be held at 6.30 pm on January 21st 2012 at Mr & Mrs Christy Abraham's residence. All are invited.

Please note that we have combined our GILEAD & JORDAN PRAYER GROUP to one group which includes the members from Mississauga, Malton, Brampton, Toronto, Stratford and London areas.

Achen's New cell phone Number

Please note the new number. **647-994-8238**

Bishop's visit

Bishop of CSI North Kerala Diocese Rt. Rev. Dr. K. P. Kuruvila will be visiting our church and leading the worship service on January 8th 2012. All are invited.

**THE VICAR AND PRESIDENT REV. SHAJI M. JOHNSON AND
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS WISH YOU ALL
A BLESSED AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR**

For more news coverage, please visit: www.torontocsi.org

January 01 First Sunday after Christmas New Year/ Covenant Service	Day of the Covenant		
	Old Testament	Genesis 17: 1– 8	English Service
	Psalm	20	Read by
	Epistle	2 Thessalonians 1: 3– 12	Mr. & Mrs. Jophy Jacob Philip
	Gospel	John 6: 66– 69	
January 08 First Sunday after Epiphany	Sharing the Good News		
	Old Testament	Isaiah 58: 6-12	Malayalam Service
	Psalm	34: 1– 11	Read by
	Epistle	Romans 12: 9– 21	Mr. Joseph Thomas & family
	Gospel	John 1: 35– 42	
January 15 Second Sunday after Epiphany Mission Sunday	Mission: Service to Humanity		
	Old Testament	Isaiah 42: 1– 9	English Service
	Psalm	146	Read by
	Epistle	1 Corinthians 1: 18– 31	Mission Committee Members
	Gospel	John 13: 1– 17	
January 22 Third Sunday after Epiphany	Ecumenism		
	Old Testament	2 Chronicles 30: 13– 22	Malayalam Service
	Psalm	122	Read by
	Epistle	2 Corinthians 1: 10– 18	Mr. Samuel Anselm Samuel & family
	Gospel	John 10: 7– 18	
January 29 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany [Matin Service]	Supremacy of Christ		
	Old Testament	Isaiah 41: 1– 4	English Service
	Psalm	110	Read by
	Epistle	Revelations 5: 1– 14	Mr. P. Mathew Verghis & family
	Gospel	John 1: 29– 34	

BIRTHDAYS

09	Joy Abraham	29	Neha Chemmanoor
23	Abraham P. George	29	Megan Thomas
28	Suzane Sneha Joseph	30	Selvarajan Thampy Puthenkulangara



ANNIVERSARIES

03	Santosh Cherian & Jenny Varghese
05	Mathew Joseph & Mary Joseph
07	Jophy Philip & Smitha Victor Sam
13	Joy & Mini Chemmanoor
16	Sudeep & Sarah Oommen
21	Raj Hariharan & Sonia Raj
26	Shibu Paul Pulikaparambil & Shiny Paul
27	Joseph Thomas & Raimole Joseph

Inspirational

After Christmas, What Next?

Chris George

A father was boxing up the Christmas decorations and ornaments on Boxing Day. His 4 year old daughter began to cry. “Why are you crying Amy?” asked the father. “Because you’re boxing up baby Jesus!” replied the daughter. This little girl’s concern impacted my heart and set me thinking. Is this what we do with our Lord Jesus after Christmas? During the Christmas season, we have our Christmas services, cantatas, carols, and Christmas get togethers to keep our focus on Immanuel-God with us. After Christmas, our mindset changes drastically. We go to school or work, come home to household chores or homework, and do many different things in between. We end up having no time for Christ and instead, box Him up. We only remember Christ on

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The 2012 Gift

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Unscramble each of the clue words.
Copy the letters in the numbered cells to other cells with the same number.

Candlelight Carol Service 2011

Mona Anna Abraham

One of the Christmas highlights of CSI church Toronto this year was the Candlelight Carol Service held on December 17, 2011 at 6.30 p.m.. The “Evening of Lights, Lessons and Carols” was celebrated through a thoughtful selection of lessons from the Bible, marvellously diverse carols and familiar congregational hymns. The candle-lit sanctuary and the soft candle light glowing on the faces of choir members during the processional hymn replicated the starry night in Bethlehem, setting a meditative mood and a wonderful start to the evening’s celebration.



The choir with Mr. Daniel Thomas conducting, presented a varied selection of English and Malayalam anthems adapted from foreign carols such as Cornish (*Sans Day carol*), French (*Good News is Here!*), Carribean (*Alleluia*) and Lebanese (*Jathanayi Bethlehemil*). A unique highlight was the premiere of *Pulmedeyil*, a Christmas anthem commissioned by our Achen specially for this year’s service. Sung

with a touch of Indian classical music, this finely composed anthem offered a fresh musical take to the service. The rendition of *Christmas Praise* accompanied by memorable soloists, Priya Abraham and Suzane Thomas left the congregation in amazement as they hit the high notes powerfully and with ease. There was also a female voice (*Alleluia*), a male voice (*Good Christian Men, Rejoice*) and a small ensemble (*Good News is Here!*) who sang in turns inspirational messages through heavenly voices. The service was also made complete notably by the excellence of the harmonization and descants that accompanied several congregational carols.

The gentle, nativity scene portrayed by the Sunday School children was absolutely stunning. *Happy Birthday Jesus* was beautifully sung by the children and accompanied by talented soloists, Chris George and Emily Varghese. The youth choir also rolled with the Spirit when they sang *The Little Drummer Boy* with vigour. It was a blessing to witness the packed church's enthusiasm to the music, whether they were listening along or singing heartily.



(Continued on page 12)

Hop Skip and Jump

Suja Sarah Koshy

Sam, a believer, had been saved in a large tent meeting three years ago. A colleague of his had invited him over and Sam had gone along with his family. Sam was thrilled that he had come to know the Lord in a very personal way. His once-wild days had gotten into control and he actually liked this new discipline in his life. Though he didn't have answers to all his troubles he was at peace and was assured that Christ was in control. He tried his best to be a good husband and a dutiful father just as the Word said.

Well, days turned to weeks, weeks to months and months to years and now he was faced with a challenge: he wanted to join the "right" church. He wanted his children to learn the Word from a church that taught Sunday School every week, where the youth group learned the Word and acted according to it, where they had young couples counseling and where people loved and cared each other. He had a lot on his wish list for that perfect church. Well it had been over three years now and Sam was beginning to feel depressed. The initial thrill of being a Christian had vanished and he even wondered whether it was at a desperate moment in life that he had said "Yes" to Christ.

Sam was pondering over these matters and in fact researching on a church but he was tired, fell asleep and had a dream. He was walking through the woods and someone called his name from behind. As he turned back he saw a man he had never seen before. The stranger's eyes seemed very kind and compassionate and he felt drawn towards this stranger. Rather abruptly the stranger began conversing with Sam.

Stranger: Hey Sam, how are you? You seem so withdrawn and sad. Aren't you a Christian believer? I don't see that joy in you, has your initial love towards the Lord and your excitement over the Word died down? You often seem sad and desperate. What is the problem?

Sam felt a sudden comfort level with this stranger whose voice was rather firm but very soothing. Without actually realizing it, Sam opened up to him.

Sam: Hello Sir! I really don't know you but now that you ask, you see, I was saved three years ago – there was so much joy in knowing the Lord. I used to spend several hours studying the scriptures, there was such a passion in me. I would sense the Holy Spirit and I loved how the Lord spoke to me in various ways. However, when I started going to church, I was shocked to see the people, yes I mean it, church going Christian people behave totally absurd and out of the word, it was just so ridiculous, right from the top all the way down to the individuals in the congregation. You know... I went to that church downtown for a while, the sermons were good but the songs just didn't match up and yet the singers would never hesitate to boast about their singing abilities. There was no zest in the songs, just no life in them. Then I

went to that church close to home, well that was pretty good, I actually went there for a month in a row and then I met one of the ushers, up close and personal, and saw that he had his ear pierced! I never returned to that church! Then I was invited over by a friend to his church, it was not too bad but the timings were awful and it was a headache to get parking. I go there just to please my friend now. Then I searched online and went to another church everything was good the people seemed so caring, the pastor was great, the songs were good. But when I saw the person sitting next to me raise his hand up to the heavens, I saw the tattoo of a scorpion on his hand! So on and so forth, right now I am just researching about a church about 6 miles away from here, I hear its good but last night I just heard from the media that there were serious allegations against the senior pastor of that church. I am totally lost, where will my family and I worship now?

Stranger: Oh now I know why you are so sad, Sam you are going to keep searching but you will never find that perfect church. There is no such church –because churches mostly consist of imperfect people. While in this world, we all try to attain perfection. Only the bride church of Christ is that perfect church that will one day be with Him forever. Until then we just need to follow His Word. The scriptures and the Holy Spirit ought to guide us. As the word says- (Isaiah 30:21) *“Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left”*. In spite of how adverse the circumstances are, Christ has taught us forgiveness and love. Jesus says,

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets”.

“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us”

Sam: My friend thank you so much for opening my eyes – these commandments - they sound so simple! Yet they are almost impossible! Woe to me! I almost failed due to my self-righteous attitude. Thanks a lot for the reminder, my friend. Here after I'll remember to take the log out of my eye before I take the speck out of another's eye.

They said good bye and parted ways.

Sam woke up the next morning, a more mature believer, realizing that the only perfect example to follow is Jesus Christ and as long as he lives he would try to be like HIM. He realized the importance of submitting to authorities and how he shouldn't be too quick to judge. Oh, and he also learned that there was no point in “hopping, skipping and jumping” to try and find that perfect place of worship.

The Interim Executive Committee Members of the CSI Church, Toronto

President	Rev. Shaji M. Johnson	Men's Fellowship Director	Mr. Zac Santhosh Koshy
Vice-President	Mr. Abraham P. George	Women's Fellowship Director	Mrs. Susan Joseph
Secretary	Mr. Christy Abraham	Youth Fellowship Director	Mr. T. Mathew Chacko
Joint Secretary	Mr. Thomas Mathai	Sunday School Director	Mrs. Raimole Joseph
Treasurer	Mr. Joseph P. Mathews	Choir Director	Mrs. Elizabeth Mathai
Joint Treasurer	Mr. Sanju Cherian	Entertainment Director	Mr. Joy Chemmanoor
Wardens	Mr. Daniel Thomas Mr. Prashanth T. Koshy	Trustees	Mr. Benjamin Chacko Mr. Sajan Itty

(Continued from page 6- After Christmas)

Sundays when we unpack Jesus and focus on Him for that one day. Soon enough, we forget about Christ for the rest of the week.

I have been spending quite a lot of time, thinking about the little girl's response. I have determined that I too, do not want to box up Jesus. In fact, I think I will move the nativity scene to a shelf in my bedroom all year long. I am definitely giving Jesus, my Lord and Saviour, pre-eminence in my life. I will set aside a definite time to read and meditate on the Word of God and to journal my thoughts on it. Praise God, communication lines between God and me, are open all day and night! – So I can talk to him whenever and for whatever reason. No doubt, 2012 will be an exciting year for me, for I will be celebrating Christmas every day of the year! Would you join me? After all, Christmas is not an event, not a happening, but a Person, and He is Jesus, the Almighty God. He of course, can never be boxed up!

(Continued from page 9- Candlelight)

We are most grateful to all those who have prepared the Church for this festive service- from the highly skilled instrumentalists Chacko Jacob, Samuel Chacko, Chris George, Vinay John *et al.* to those who made the church a sight to behold with decorations to those who provided hospitality. As was emphasized in the blessed Christmas message by Rt. Rev. Dr. Philip M Poole, the chief guest for the service, GOD IS GOOD! GOD IS ALWAYS GOOD!